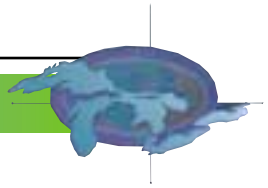

Chemical Acronyms/Terms Used in This Report

α- and γ-HCH	Hexachloro-cyclohexane - a manufactured chemical that does not occur naturally in the environment. It exists in eight chemical forms (called isomers). One of these forms, γ (gamma)-HCH (also known as lindane) was used as an insecticide on fruit and vegetable crops (including greenhouse vegetables and tobacco) and forest crops (including Christmas trees). It is still used in ointments to treat head and body lice, and scabies. It is also known as BHC (benzene hexachloride).
μg/m^3	Microgram per cubic metre - unit of measure.
atrazine	A common herbicide used on agricultural crops, especially corn.
BaP	Benzo-[*a*]-pyrene - one type of PAH (see definition).
DDE	Dichlorodiphenyl-dichloroethylene - a degradation product of DDT.
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane - the first organochlorine pesticide developed (1939). It is persistent in the environment and has been linked to numerous ecosystem effects. It has been banned from use in Canada and the United States.
dieldrin	Dieldrin was a popular pesticide for crops such as corn and cotton from 1950-1970. Concerns about damage to the environment and the potential harm to human health led EPA to ban all uses of dieldrin in 1974 except to control termites. In 1987, EPA banned all uses.
HCB	Hexachlorobenzene is released primarily as a byproduct of industrial and combustion processes. It was used as an industrial chemical and is currently present as an impurity in pesticides, Hexachlorobenzene is considered to be a persistent, bioaccumulastive toxic substance (PBT). PBTs have serious potential human health and/or environmental effects.
heptachlor epoxide	Heptachlor was used extensively in the past for killing insects in homes, buildings, and on food crops, especially corn. Use slowed in the 1970s and stopped in 1988. Heptachlor epoxide is a degradation product of heptachlor and is more commonly found in the environment.
mirex	Mirex was used to control fire ants, and as a flame retardant in plastics, rubber, paint, paper, and electrical goods from 1959 to 1972. It has not been manufactured since 1978.
nitrate and nitrite	Inorganic chemicals occurring naturally as part of the nitrogen cycle. Nitrate is also used or found in fertilizers as potassium or sodium nitrate.
ng/L	Nanogram per litre - unit of measure.

OCS	Octachlorostyrene - not commercially manufactured, but has been reported to be an inadvertent by-product of certain chemical processes. OCS may also result from various incineration processes. OCS is persistent (i.e., it is resistant to chemical and/or metabolic degradation), has high bioaccumulation potential (i.e., increase in concentration in the upper levels of an aquatic food web) and is toxic.
PAH	Poly-aromatic hydrocarbons - a class of over 100 very stable organic molecules; they are highly carcinogenic but are also very common; they are a standard product of combustion, and are usually found as a mixture of 2 or more.
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyls - a class of manufactured organic chemicals that contain 209 individual chemicals (known as congeners); there are no known natural sources of PCBs. PCBs contain one or more atoms of chlorine, are resistant to high temperatures, and do not break down in the environment.
PCDD / PCDF	Polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins / polychlorinated dibenzofurans - a group of unwanted by-products of many chemical, industrial and combustion processes. Also found as impurities in some pesticides.
ppm	Parts per million - unit of measure.
toxaphene	An insecticide containing over 670 chemicals; used primarily in the southern United States to control insect pests on cotton and other crops; it was also used to control insect pests on livestock and to kill unwanted fish in lakes. Toxaphene was one of the most heavily used insecticides in the United States until 1982, when it was banned for most uses; all uses were banned in 1990.